



Department of State

File Liberty 453
TELEGRAM
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ACTION L 03

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1968 MAY 3

INFO NEA 13,SS 20,NSC 10,GPM 04,CIAE 00,INR 07,NSAE 00,RSC 01,DODE 00,

H 02,RSR 01, /061 W

R 031100Z MAY 68

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3772

REVIEWED BY John Kelley DATE 1/10/83

RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATA ADV.
TS AUTH. REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED ☒ RELEASABLE
RELEASE DENIED ☐
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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SUBJ: USS LIBERTY CLAIMS

REF: TEL AVIV 3397 AND STATE 148286

1. I RAISED THE MATTER OF USS LIBERTY CLAIMS WITH FONMIN EBAN MAY 2. HE APPEARED UNINFORMED OF STATUS OF MATTER AND I ACCORDINGLY EXPLAINED THAT WE HAD SUBMITTED CLAIMS IN RELATION TO THE DEATHS SOME TIME AGO. ISRAELI REACTION WAS THAT THEY WOULD GIVE IMMEDIATE ATTENTION TO PROBLEM BUT SO FAR NOTHING HAS TRANSPIRED. ISRAELI LAWYERS CONSULTED THE DEPARTMENT AND SEEMED SATISFIED THAT CLAIMS WERE NOT EXORBITANT.

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I URGED THAT THE CLAIMS BE SETTLED EXPEDITIOUSLY ON HUMANITARIAN GROUNDS AS CLAIMANTS WERE IN SOME CASES HARD UP AND IN ANY EVENT A NUMBER WERE APPEALING THROUGH THE DEPARTMENT, THROUGH CONGRESS AND OTHERWISE FOR SOME ACTION.

2. BITAN, WHO WAS ALSO PRESENT, CONFIRMED MY SUMMARY OF THE SITUATION, ADDING THAT THE ISRAELI LAWYERS BOTH IN WASHINGTON AND IN JERUSALEM RECOMMEND PAYMENT BUT THERE HAD BEEN SOME FEELING THAT THE GOI WOULD HAVE AN ASSURANCE THAT THE CALCULATIONS OF COMPENSATION FOR "MENTAL ANGUISH" ARE IN LINE WITH SOME ACCEPTED AMERICAN SCALE AND DEPARTMENT HAD SO FAR BEEN UNABLE GIVE SUCH ASSURANCE. I ARGUED THAT IT MIGHT BE THAT SUCH ASSURANCE WOULD BE MEANINGLESS.

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SINCE MY UNDERSTANDING IS THAT IN ANY CASE AMERICANS COULD UPSET SUCH A TABLE BY SUCCESSFUL ACTION IN THE COURT OF CLAIMS. I REITERATED THAT IN ANY EVENT I FOUND THE ARGUMENT FOR RAPID PAYMENT OF THE CLAIMS AS PRESENTED ON HUMANITARIAN AND POLITICAL GROUNDS OVER-RIDING.

3. EBAN AGREED WITH ME THAT IT IS A POLITICAL AND

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HUMANITARIAN PROBLEM AND SAID HE WOULD SPEAK PERSONALLY TO THE MINISTER OF FINANCE THIS MORNING BEFORE LEAVING FOR EUROPE.

EXEMPT. BARBOUR

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